

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-06 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 101754Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8368

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 09117

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR, VN VS

SUBJECT: GVN EMBASSY VIEW OF "FRENCH INITIATIVE
CONCERNING VIETNAM"

SUMMARY: GVN AMBASSADOR WAS ABLE TO SEE GOF REPRESENTA-
TIVES ABOUT FRENCH PROPOSALS ONLY AFTER CONSIDERABLE
PERSISTENCE--IN CONTRAST WITH GOF PUBLICIZED STATEMENT
THAT IT WAS CONTACTING ALL IMPORTANT PARTIES INVOLVED.
FRENCH REPEATED ONLY OLD LINE AND GAVE LITTLE INDICATION
OF WHAT THEY REALLY ARE UP TO. GVN REPS HERE INTEND TO
CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN DIGNITY AND FINESSE GOF OBVIOUS
CALL FOR REPLACEMENT OF THIEU. END SUMMARY.

1. GVN AMBASSADOR NGUYEN DUY QUANG TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 10
THAT HE REQUESTED APPOINTMENTS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER
SAUVAGNARGUES AND PRESIDENT GISCARD FOLLOWING THE PUBLI-
CATION OF THE FRENCH APRIL 5 COMMUNIQUE ON HUMANITARIAN
AID AND CALL FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF VIETNAM PROBLEM.
SAUVAGNARGUES WAS UNAVAILABLE AND QUAI SECRETARY
GENERAL COURCEL FINALLY SAW QUANG APRIL 9. COURCEL
EMPHASIZED THAT FRENCH WISHED A PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF
THE VIETNAM PROBLEM. GOF SOUNDINGS OF DRV AND PRG
INDICATED THAT ONLY FACTOR PREVENTING NEGOTIATIONS WAS
CONTINUED PRESENCE OF PRESIDENT THIEU. COURCEL ARGUED
THAT GVN SHOULD ACCEPT THESE CONDITIONS SINCE WITH
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DETERIORATING MILITARY SITUATION FUTURE CONDITIONS WOULD

PROBABLY BE EVEN WORSE.

2. QUANG REPLIED THAT ACCEPTING SUCH A PRECONDITION FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT ANY INDICATION OF SINCERITY OF THE COMMUNISTS PEACEFUL INTENT WOULD IN EFFECT BE A FORM OF SURRENDER, WHICH HE WAS SURE HIS GOVERNMENT COULD NOT ACCEPT. HE ALSO NOTED THAT EXPERIENCE WITH A COMMUNIST NEGOTIATING CRITERIA HAD SHOWN THAT ACCEPTANCE OF ONE SERIES OF CONDITIONS LEADS MERELY TO NEW CONDITIONS. WHILE GVN COULD ONLY PRAISE ANY EFFORT THE FRENCH MIGHT MAKE TO SERVE AS INTERMEDIARY, THE REPETITION OF THE COMMUNIST POSITION DID NOT, IN QUANG'S VIEW, CONSTITUTE AN OPENING TOWARD A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WHICH WAS ACCEPTABLE TO HIS GOVERNMENT.

3. ELYSEE SECRETARY GENERAL BROSSOLETTE FINALLY AGREED TO RECEIVE QUANG LATE APRIL 9. BY THIS TIME, GISCARD'S APRIL 9 STATEMENT WAS WELL KNOWN, AND QUANG ARGUED THAT THE CURRENT GVN FULFILLED GISCARD'S CONDITIONS AS A GOVERNMENT FAVORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 12 OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT. QUANG CITED THE 4 SPECIFIC PROPOSALS THE GVN HAD MADE IN CELLE ST. CLOUD TALKS. BROSSOLETTE SPOKE ONLY IN VERY GENERAL TERMS, BUT IT WAS CLEAR TO QUANG THAT THE GOF STATEMENT WAS DESIGNED TO CALL FOR THIEU'S DEPARTURE. QUANG SAID THAT IN HIS PRESS STATEMENT FOLLOWING THE CONVERSATION AND IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW APRIL 10 HE HAD NOTED THAT THE GVN FORTHCOMING POSITION ON ARTICLE 12 MEANT THAT JOURNALISTS WERE READING AN ANTI-THIEU POSITION INTO THE GISCARD STATEMENT WHICH WAS NOT SUPPORTED BY THE TEXT ITSELF.

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L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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4. QUANG SAID THAT AT A SOUTH EAST ASIAN AMBASSADOR LUNCHEON APRIL 10 IT WAS THE GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT THE FRENCH WERE PLAYING AN INSINCERE ROLE. SEVERAL AMBASSADORS THOUGHT FRENCH INTENTIONS WERE PRIMARILY TO SERVE FRENCH ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

5. QUANG ALSO NOTED FRENCH PARTIALITY IN PUBLICIZING ITS INITIATIVE IN CONTACTING ALL THE VIETNAMESE ELEMENTS WHEN THEY HAD IN FACT CONSULTED WITH THE DRV AMB, THE HEAD OF THE PRG MISSION, CERTAIN "NONCOMMUNISTS NATIONALISTS", BUT HAD RECEIVED THE GVN'S REPRESENTATIVE ONLY AFTER PERSISTENT PRESSURE. QUANG COMMENTED THAT GVN INTENDED TO MAINTAIN THE DIGNIFIED POSTURE WHICH BOTH HE AND ACTING HEAD OF GVN DELEGATION HAD SHOWN TO DATE. THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO REFRAIN FROM REFERRING TO THAT ASPECT OF FRENCH PROPOSAL WHICH CLEARLY CONSTITUTED INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOUTH VIETNAM.

6. COMMENT: GOF HAS CLEARLY NOT CONSIDERED GVN EMBASSY HERE AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING ITS INITIATIVE; GOF RECEIVED GVN REP ONLY OUT OF COURTESY AND OBVIOUSLY DID NOT LET HIM IN ON THE REAL SUBSTANCE OF THE FRENCH EFFORT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: buchandr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975PARIS09117
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750125-0946
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750463/aaaacfnf.tel
Line Count: 154
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchandr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <01 OCT 2003 by buchandr>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GVN EMBASSY VIEW OF "FRENCH INITIATIVE CONCERNING VIETNAM"
TAGS: PFOR, FR, VN, VS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006